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PROGRAM ABC World News Tonight

STATION WJLA-TV
ABC Network

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SUBJECT Klaus Barbie

FRANK REYNOLDS: The Soviets have now begun what will probably be a sustained campaign of attacks on the United States for the alleged connection between this country's intelligence services right after World War II and Klaus Barbie, the former Gestapo chief in Lyon, France, who has now, after all these years finally been extradited from Bolivia to France to stand trial for war crimes.

Tonight, John Martin has a report on Barbie and a man who knew him in Bolivia.

JOHN MARTIN: The man who took these photos of Nazi fugitive Klaus Barbie in Bolivia is a former international jewel thief and burglar named Robert Wilson, who says the two men met there in 1972 and formed a fast but wary friendship.

ROBERT WILSON: I have a criminal background for some 30 years. And he's obviously a very cultivated criminal. We felt very comfortable around each other.

MARTIN: So comfortable, by 1975, Wilso says, that Barbie permitted him to record a conversation in which he asked Barbie about his infamous reputation.

KLAUS BARBIE: In the world history, that is true. That is absolutely true.

MARTIN: In halting English, Barbie talks, says Wilson, of wartime Lyon, where 4000 French Jews and resistance fighters died at the hands of Barbie and his men, crimes for which he was later convicted in absentia.